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ABSTRACT

A proactive individual can perceive, research, evaluate, and act upon a problem in a manner that is responsible to both himself and to the society. The development of proactive students requires changes in teacher training strategies. Teachers must behave as "directors" and not "dictators" of student learning, and curricula must be changed to reflect future studies concerns as well as the present. One instructional strategy which has proven to be helpful in nurturing proactive behavior is the Human and Environment Learning Program (HELP). HELP exposes students to global environments and to related problems using a model with three processes: perception, thought pattern, and action. Another approach can be found in the creation of Global Horizons, a program for the teaching of those elements of environmental education and social studies which help the student to understand and to perceive his relationship to other people and to the world. Global education should be an effort to cultivate in young people a perspective of the world which emphasizes the interconnections among cultures, species, and the planet. Opportunities should be expanded for preservice and inservice teachers to train in this area. (CJ)

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TEACHING STUDENTS TO BE PROACTIVE
CHANGE AGENTS IN A GLOBAL AGE:
A New Direction for Preservice
and Inservice Teacher Education

Dr. Richard Peters

AUGUST 1981

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What Is A Proactive Student?

An individual who (when properly equipped with knowledge, social skills, and exposed to diverse learning experiences) perceives problems, researches the problems for causes/effects, collects and analyzes data, critically evaluates alternative courses-of-action, and makes a commitment (decision) to act in some responsible manner. A proactive individual is a change agent!

What Is The Challenge For Teacher Education?

The development of proactive students requires several changes in teacher training strategies (preservice and inservice), attitudes toward student learning, and in curricula.

1) Teachers must perceive themselves as 'directors' of student learning and not as 'dictators' of what will be learned, when it will be learned, and how it will be learned. The classroom teacher must become skilled in working with students rather than always talking to them. In some cases this approach is frightening and threatening to the classroom teacher. No longer is he/she the only voice in the classroom. No longer are students passive by-standers - but rather become active participants in their own education! No longer do students accept as 'gospel' everything told them by the teacher -- but rather they explore issues/problems and inquire into causes-and-effects. Realize that these student-directed learning

activities can only take place after they have been exposed to/ trained in basic subject matter content and skills. This then should become the key role played by the teacher in the proactive action process; the teacher equips each and every student with the knowledge and skills needed, by them, to explore/inquire on their own -- with teacher supervision.

2) Teachers must structure learning (as well as 'free-time' inquiry opportunities) experiences so that students can begin to explore and learn on their own. Teachers ~~must~~ provide learning options (alternative activities) which are based upon a perceptual understanding of diverse student abilities and interests.

3) The doors of classrooms must be opened, wide, to let in the world which exists outside the school. The teacher must be willing to share teaching activities with those in the community who are skilled and qualified to help students explore, inquire, and learn. Community resource people should be incorporated into the learning/teaching process, and students should be directly exposed to community resource sites (via field trips) on a regular basis -- as an integral part of structured lessons/units. (SEE DIAGRAM I)

4) Curricula must be changed to reflect future studies concerns as well as deal with the present. Learning activities must equip students to live in tomorrow's world -- as well as in today's. Thus,

there is a need for preservice teacher trainees and inservice teachers to be 'educated' in future studies.

Why Are Future Studies Important To The Classroom Teacher?

According to the Global 2000 Report to the President (1980),¹ if present trends (in human population growth, misuse of Earth's resources, and pollution of the environment) continue, the world in 2000 will be more crowded, more polluted, less stable ecologically, and more vulnerable to disruption than the world we live in now.

- . The world's population will grow from 4 billion in 1975 to 6.35 billion in 2000, an increase of more than 50 percent. Ninety percent of this growth will occur in the poorest countries.
- . Per capita food consumption in South Asia, the Middle East, and the lesser developed countries of Africa will scarcely improve or will actually decline below present inadequate levels. Food prices will double.
- . Arable land will increase only 4 percent by 2000.

1

Reference to the Global 2000 Report to the President. (Washington, DC: Council On Environmental Quality; 1980)

- . During the 1990s, world oil production will approach maximum production capacity. Also, needs for fuelwood will exceed available supplies by about 25 percent before the turn of the century.
- . Regional water shortages will become more severe.
- . Serious deterioration of agricultural soils will occur worldwide.
- . Extinctions of plant and animal species will increase dramatically.

These are but a few of the reasons why teachers must become better informed about tomorrow, and why there is a need to make today's students aware of Earth's plight -- unless changes are made in our lifestyles and our attitudes toward Earth.

In both preservice training programs and inservice staff development programs a greater emphasis can be placed on future studies and how related knowledge/materials/skills can be infused into existing curricula.

HELP!

One instructional strategy which has proven to be helpful in nurturing proactive behavior within students is the Humans and Environment Learning Program (HELP).

HELP is a social studies based program and the perspective for learning is multi-dimensional; from the individual - to the community - to the state and nation - to the world. Students are not only introduced to factual content in environmental education/global education/social studies, but they are also trained in subject matter related skills which are later applied in practical learning situations. (SEE DIAGRAM I) Using a variety of instructional activities/techniques as well as print/non-print materials, HELP exposes students to global environments and to related problems.

DIAGRAM I

SAMPLE GLOBAL AWARENESS UNIT

AREA OF STUDY:	Sensory Awareness of Environments
CONCEPT:	How living things respond to lifespace environments.
PURPOSE:	To acquaint students with diverse natural/social (human-made) environments as well as different geographic regions of the Earth.
GRADE RANGE:	5 - 12
SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:	1) Students visit the community/school libraries and select books dealing with natural/social environments. Reports (oral/written) can be developed.

- 2) Audiovisual materials are used to expose students to diverse global environments. Selected materials include:

The Face of the Earth

Living in Different Places

Regions of the Earth

The Desert: An Example of Adaptation

- 3) Using globes and maps, students locate selected countries. Books are read which discuss these countries in detail.
- 4) Students draw outline maps of the world and locate different regions on them. Maps can be used for bulletin board displays.
- 5) Guest speakers who have traveled to foreign countries discuss their experiences and impressions of these countries re lifestyles and cultures. Similarities/differences may be drawn between life in the United States and these foreign countries.
- 6) Trips are taken into surrounding environments for purposes of observation. Films and/or video tapes can be made.
- 7) Students make bulletin board displays which depict different global environments and how people have adapted to their surroundings.
- 8) Students research topics such as human population, starvation, poverty, and natural resources. Reports can be developed.

- 9) Students conduct comparative studies involving selected regions of the United States and foreign countries. The task is to identify similarities/differences among/between nations regarding topics such as geographical features, resources, human population distribution and density, land use.
- 10) Students conduct a hypothetical (scenario) and role play individuals with different points-of-view regarding an environmental issue.

EVALUATION:

- 1) Classroom activities related to map work and group activities.
- 2) Discussions.
- 3) Role playing activities.
- 4) Questions asked guest speakers.
- 5) Reports.
- 6) Field trip related activities.
- 7) Student logs and visual reports.
- 8) Tests/quizzes.

Suggested activity #10 in the Sample Unit (page 7) stated that students would conduct a scenario in which each student would role play a person representing a different point-of-view, regarding an environmental issue.

The HELP approach to global awareness uses a Proactive Action Model (SEE DIAGRAM II) in order to involve students in critical thinking/decision-making exercises. The Proactive Action Model (PAM) is best associated with the homeostasis school of psychological thought which contends that human beings use knowledge and reason to direct their actions. PAM consists of three interrelated mental/physical processes:

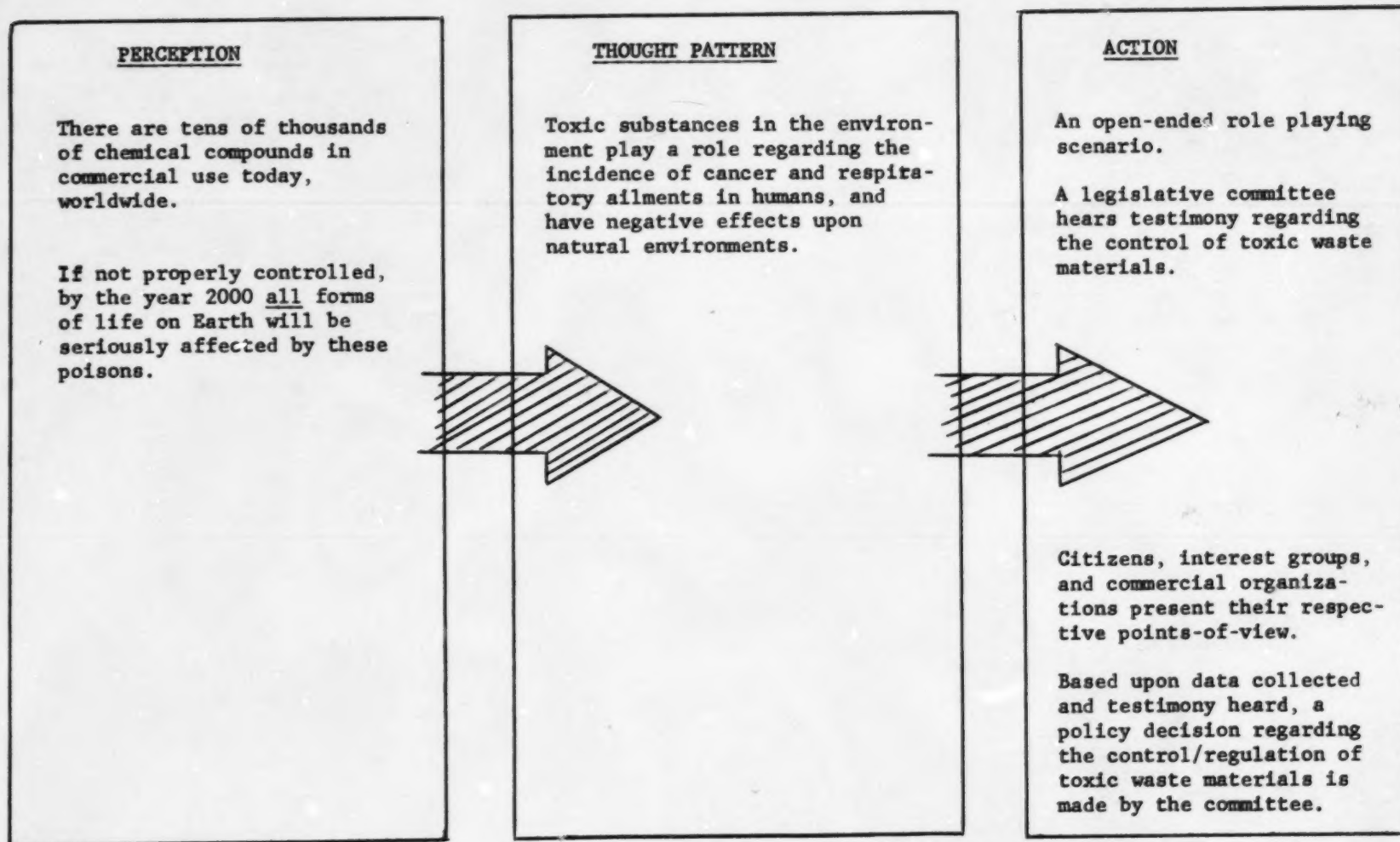
Perception: How an individual views something. Perceptions are based on previously learned knowledge, skills, and attitudes as well as direct and vicarious experiences.

Thought Pattern: The mental processes of bringing isolated facts and skills together with attitudes to solve a problem or confront an issue.

Action: An overt behavior which will result in something happening or being accomplished.

DIAGRAM II

PROACTIVE ACTION MODEL



-6-

2

Jan L. Tucker spoke to the issue of teacher training in proactive student development and global studies/future studies when he stated that teacher education (in these areas) should be perceived as a broad change process. A change process, in the opinion of this author, which involves change in:

- . the community's perception and understanding of what formal education should be, and which clearly stated goals and objectives the school(s) should strive to achieve.
- . curricula -- with an emphasis on global studies.
- . teacher perceptions of what the social studies should be and how to achieve desired changes.
- . the role(s) students play in their own education as well as their training and skills development in critical thinking and decision-making.

2

Jan L. Tucker, Director, Center for International Education, Florida International University (1980)

While there are several future studies programs at the college/university level (SEE FUTURE STUDIES PROGRAM PAGE), there is no coordinated, nationwide inservice program for classroom teachers. Each and every school system is on its own when it comes to inservice training in the future studies/global studies. There are several organizations which can be helpful to local school systems desiring to institute future studies/global studies programs (SEE SELECTED ORGANIZATIONS).

This author has recently organized an effort to create future studies/global studies programs for Kindergarten - Grade Twelve. GLOBAL HORIZONS is envisioned as a center for applied ecosocial studies -- a focal point for investigations into the instructional value of diverse instructional activities/strategies, hardware/software, organizational patterns, and conceptual models (such as the Proactive Action Model discussed on pages 8-9). Ecosocial studies pertain to those elements of environmental education (of which global studies is a part) and the social studies which help the student better understand the character and nature of surrounding lifespace environments, and to perceive his/her relationship to other people and to the world as a whole.

In March 1981, the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) adopted a position statement on global education. NCSS defines 'global education' as the efforts to cultivate in young people a perspective of the world which emphasizes the interconnections among cultures, species, and the planet. The purpose of global education (as NCSS sees it) is to develop in youth the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to live effectively in a world possessing limited natural resources and characterized by ethnic diversity, cultural pluralism, and increasing interdependence.

NCSS recommends that the social studies should emphasize:

- ... that the human experience is an increasingly globalized phenomenon in which people are constantly being influenced by transnational, cross-cultural, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic interactions;
- ... that humankind is an integral part of the world environment;
- ... the linkages between present social, political, and ecological realities and alternative futures;
- ... citizen participation in world affairs.

There are several ways by which teacher trainees and veteran teachers can be exposed to and instructed in global studies/future studies -- as part of their training in the proactive development process for students.

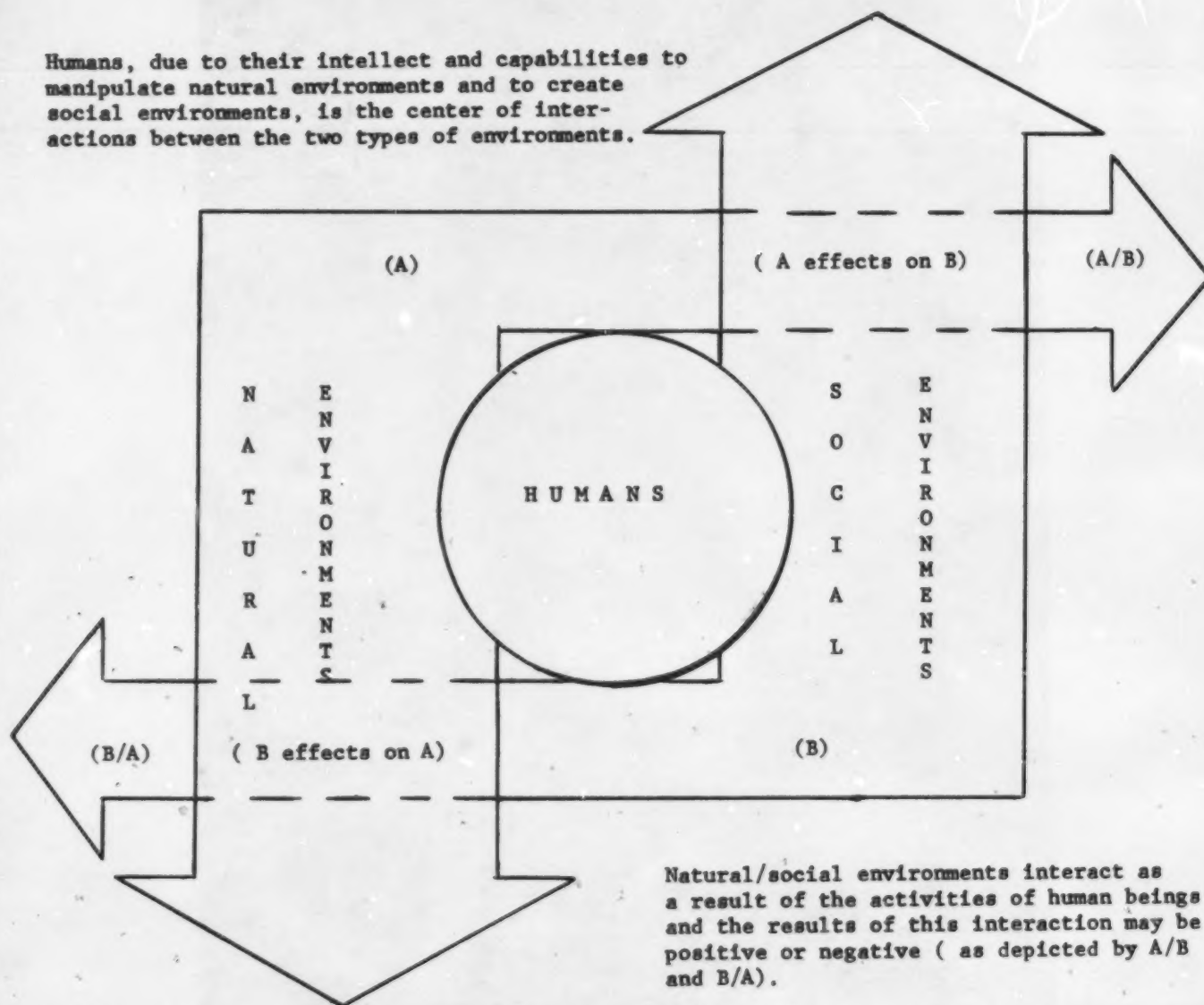
Preservice Courses. As part of a teacher trainee's professional course of studies emphasis should be placed on humanistic studies (thus enabling the future teacher to become sensitive to diverse student abilities/needs) and global/future studies. Opportunities should be made available to trainees to apply learned knowledge and skills in role playing situations and in real classrooms -- under the close supervision of veteran teachers.

Inservice Courses. Arrangements can be made with area colleges/universities to offer structured courses in global studies/future studies. Environmental education courses, science courses, social studies courses such as anthropology, geography, and sociology can be offered. Working with subject matter specialists and consultants, local school systems can create structured courses and offer them, to staff, on a regular basis. Instructors can be obtained from area colleges/universities or classroom teachers from the system (as well as subject matter supervisors/specialists) can conduct the classes.

Inservice Workshops. Curriculum coordinators, subject matter specialists, state department of education personnel, consultants, etc. should provide learning opportunities in environmental education and global studies-related knowledge, skills, materials, and instructional strategies. Follow-up activities should be scheduled so as to provide opportunities for the application of knowledge about the subject areas to lesson/unit development (REFERENCE TO SAMPLE UNIT, pages 5-7), selection and evaluation of instructional hardware/software for classroom use, the planning of instructional activities, etc .

Visitations. Classroom teachers can be released from their daily routines to visit other classrooms where global studies are taking place, to visit community resource sites such as museums, libraries, etc., and to attend lectures/seminars.

Humans, due to their intellect and capabilities to manipulate natural environments and to create social environments, is the center of interactions between the two types of environments.



Natural/social environments interact as a result of the activities of human beings - and the results of this interaction may be positive or negative (as depicted by A/B and B/A).

FUTURE STUDIES PROGRAMS

A number of colleges and universities around the United States are currently offering bachelor's and/or master's degree programs in future studies. The following is a partial list:

The Futures Planning, Forecasting and Assessment Program
Fairleigh Dickinson University
Madison, New Jersey 07940

Program In Business Innovation and Strategy
Florida Atlantic University
Boca Raton, Florida 33432

Program in Futures Studies
University of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

Studies of the Future
University of Houston at Clear Lake City
Houston, Texas 77058

Center for Futuristic Studies
International Graduate School of Education
Parker, Colorado 80134

Program for the Study of the Future
Kean College of New Jersey
Union, New Jersey 07083

Future Studies Program
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, Massachusetts 01002

Program in Alternative Social and Educational Futures
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55409

Future Studies Program
Wittenberg University
Springfield, Ohio 45501

SELECTED ORGANIZATIONS

American Conservation Association, Inc., 30 Rockefeller Plaza,
New York, New York 10020

American Forest Institute, 1835 K Street, NW, Washington, DC
20036

Animal Wildlife Institute, P.O. Box 3492, Grand Central Station,
New York, New York 10017

Bureau of National Affairs, Inc., 1231 25th Street, NW, Washington,
DC 20037

Conservation Education Association, P.O. Box 450, Madison,
Wisconsin 53701

Ecology Action Education Institute, Box 3895, Modesto, California
95352

Friends of the Earth, 30 East 42nd Street, New York, New York
10017

Global Studies Center, Michigan State University, 513 Erickson Hall,
East Lansing, Michigan 48824

Institute for Environmental Education, 2785 Som Center Road,
Chagrin Falls, Ohio 44022

National Wildlife Federation, 1412 16th Street, NW, Washington,
DC 20036

Planned Parenthood and World Population, 810 Seventh Avenue, New York,
New York 10019

Resources for the Future, 1755 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington,
DC 20036

Society for Environmental Stabilization, P.O. Box 252, Fayetteville,
Arkansas 72701

The Conservation Foundation, 1717 Massachusetts Avenue, Washington,
DC 20036

The Population Council, 245 Park Avenue, New York, New York 10017

The Population Reference Bureau, Inc., 1756 Massachusetts Avenue,
NW, Washington, DC 20036

World Future Society, 4916 St. Elmo Avenue, Washington, DC 20014

Zero Population Growth, 367 State Street, Los Altos, California
94022

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Richard Peters received his Bachelor of Science in Education (Social Studies) and Master of Education degrees from The University of Maine (Orono); pursued doctoral studies in Social Studies Education at The Florida State University (Tallahassee); and was granted the Doctor of Education degree in Curriculum (with advanced studies in Social Studies) from The University of Rochester (NY).

Dr. Peters has been a social studies classroom teacher (grades 5-12); social studies department chairperson (grades 9-12); K-12 social studies curriculum coordinator; and supervisor of student teachers in social studies education at The University of Rochester.

Dr. Peters is a lifetime member of Delta Tau Kappa (Florida State University, 1968) and Alpha Kappa Delta (University of Southern California, 1971). He has been a member of three advisory committees for the National Council for the Social Studies; Instructional Media, Curriculum, and Rural Social Studies.

Dr. Peters has been active in the evolution of the environmental education movement (as it has pertained to public school education) since the mid-1960s. He is

responsible for the development of the SEA program for the EXPERIMENTAL SCHOOLS (ES) program of the National Institute of Education, and the HELP program at Timberlane Regional High School (NH).

The SEA program; Student Environmental Awareness, is a K-12 strategy which introduces students to their lifespace environments -- thus making them aware of the world about them. The program is based on a series of instructional units developed by classroom teachers from Fall 1973 - Spring 1977. All units have been classroom tested and revised -- if/when necessary.

The HELP program; Humans and Environment Learning Program, is a grades 9-12 awareness/exploration strategy built around the following elective courses: Economic Survival, Law and Society, Minorities, People In Their Environments, Sociology, The World-Today, and Third World Studies.

Dr. Peters has been published (in the field of environmental education/global studies) by The Educational Forum, Environmental Education Report, Journal of Geography, Social Education, and the National Council for the Social Studies.